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EU Kosovo mission: no impunity for abuse by international staff

Brussels (10 March) As EU Foreign Ministers discuss the upcoming EU-led international mission in Kosovo, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and The Norwegian Helsinki Committee warn that there can be no impunity for abuses committed by international staff deployed in Kosovo. In a joint statement issued today, the three organisations call for the EU-led mission to be subject to much greater scrutiny and accountability than its predecessor, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

The three organizations highlight UNMIK's lack of accountability in the areas of justice and police and how this can impact on the credibility of international institutions in Kosovo. Unless the EU ensures strict accountability mechanisms for any violations committed by its staff, they say, it will fail to build respect for human rights and rule of law in Kosovo. This is particularly important as the EU-led mission will have broad responsibility over public administration, reform of the criminal justice system and prosecution of war crimes.

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International put forward specific recommendations on measures to ensure effective and independent accountability mechanisms for international staff in Kosovo. They call on the EU to implement them from day one.

The full text of the joint statement is available

For further comment/background and interviews:

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